

ORIGINAL

FILED

03/08/2017

Ed Smith
CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MONTANA

Case Number: AF 09-0688

Montana Supreme Court Justices

March 4, 2017

215 North Sanders

Justice Building

Helena, Mt. 59620

Dear Honorable Justices:

I am writing in support of proposed changes to rule 8.4 that would prohibit conduct that a lawyer knows or reasonably should know is harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status or socioeconomic status in conduct related to the practice of law.

I am a retired school administrator, soon to be seventy, a native of Montana and I have a history of supporting civil rights. From a personal perspective, I have several family members who are gay. They are college educated, significant contributors in their respective careers, generous and kind in their social interactions and they have at times endured profound acts of hate due to their sexual orientation. Nonetheless, they continue their life journeys, being respectful to others and appreciating the respect and support most now give them.

During my 30 year career as a school administrator, I saw many LGBT students navigate the public school system. It was seldom easy for them, it was often unnecessarily painful for their parents as they advocated for them tirelessly.

In this twenty first century, I am encouraged to see more of the people in our state and country support equal rights for all human beings. The time has come for us to be inclusive and nurturing of LGBT people without exception.

As Justices, your leadership is pivotal in this arena. I urge you to support changes to rule 8.4 that would protect LGBT people and member of other marginalized groups as well by barring legal services providers from discriminating against them.

Please know your decision affects lives either for remarkable good or great anguish.

Yours Truly,


Carol Blades

1809 DeNittis Lane

Laurel, Mt. 59044

AF 09-0688

FILED

MAR 08 2017

Ed Smith
CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MONTANA